



NAVAJO NATION
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Western agency chapters now responsible for solid waste management



Solid Waste Management Program senior environmental specialist James Benally participates in 2012 Earth Day cleanup activities. James said chapters in the western agency would soon be responsible for solid waste management in their communities. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

TUBA CITY-On June 8, 2012, the Navajo Nation Solid Waste Management Program announced that chapters in the western agency would be responsible for solid waste management in their communities.

The chapters of Cameron, Tonalea, To'Nanees'Dizi, Leupp, Bodaway-Gap, and Kaibeto will be directly impacted by the new change in services.

The rising costs of solid waste services and lack of funds are reasons why the SWMP has terminated its Joint Powers Agreement with Coconino County for services.

Effective July 1, the solid waste transfer stations in the western agency will receive reduced services. Only household waste will be accepted, with a limited number of hauls per month for households.

Large loads, tires and white goods may be redirected to the regional landfill in Flagstaff.

Complete termination of the JPA is scheduled for Sept. 30, after which chapters will be responsible for the waste services of their communities.

James Benally, SWMP manager, said his staff is currently drafting cost sharing agreements for Oct. 2012 through Sept. 2013, to assist chapters with solid waste management.

"We are conducting inventory of each transfer station and working with chapters to determine strategic locations for transfer stations to service Navajo communities," Benally said.

He explained that chapters must have an approved resolution to participate in the cost sharing agreement.

SWMP staff are compiling price quotes for services and preparing to erect a fence and gate with signage for hours of operation.

"We are going to inform the general public and impacted chapters through public forums," Benally said. "That will give us the chance to explain the deficit we've faced all these years, trying to pay for the services outlined in the JPA."

The first forum will take place at Leupp Chapter House on June 28, beginning at 9 a.m. The second will be at the Tuba City Chapter on June 29, also starting at 9 a.m.

For more information, call the SWMP at: 928-871-6309.